

CONTEMPORARY SURVEY ON ASSOCIATIONS & EMOTIONS OF ALBERT SPEER ARCHITECTURE; SAMPLE: ZEPPELIN FIELD TRIBUNE - NUREMBERG 1934-1936

Marek Antoszczyszyn

Studio Projektowe AB S.C.
ul. Królowej Jadwigi 23/11a
70-262 Szczecin
e-mail: markant100@yahoo.pl

Abstract: The following article presents contemporary survey on associations & emotions generated by famous Zeppelin Field Tribune for Nuremberg Rallies designed by Albert Speer in 1934-1936. It's probably him, who best of other Nazi architects understood Hitler's intentions, especially the one about assigning the architecture the role of glorifying the greatness of the Third Reich even thousand years later. Additionally, the article describes some architectonical manipulations that were used to achieve political targets by the Nazi regime. The paper is a part of the research on the totalitarian power architecture from the 1930s and 1940s made by the author.

Key words: Albert Speer, emotional perception, totalitarian system architecture, Zeppelin Field Tribune.

Introduction

It is well known from mass historical sources that Nazi system emphasized various propaganda means to manipulate German society for the political benefits. Architecture took a special role in this process mainly thanks to German Reichskanzler and Leader (*Führer*) of the nation - Adolf Hitler. Nobody else more like him - an unfulfilled architect - was aware of enormously giant influence of architecture on the community. He found young Albert Speer, 28 - year - old German architect to cooperate with him about designing and constructing structures that would manipulate the masses, express power and authority as well as last for the millennium. Developing the last aspect, Speer invented the idea of *ruins value* to be implemented in his architecture. The concept set out to design large scale structures that after some time would turn into eye - catching ruins lasting thousands of years. During his travels to Greece and Italy, Speer became impressed by remains of Greek and Roman buildings from the past which actually symbolized the importance of these ancient civilizations. So he decided to do the same with his own designs for Hitler's Reich. The latter caught the concept as it was coherent with his political ideology of everlasting Reich, so he made Speer apply it to new the buildings designed for the regime [1]. Albert Speer became involved in Nuremberg Rally Grounds planning on 25th April 1934 when work on the Luitpold Arena, Zeppelin Feld as well as designing of new Congress Hall were well underway. He started with the improvement of the main layout putting forward a few variants of it until the end of 1934 [1]. He also put special attention to the Zeppelin Field

south east of Dutzendteich Lakes that gave its name to the first airships to fly over Germany and used it as a landing area since 1909. Considering several constraints like: annual nature of the Rally gatherings, existence of several buildings from the past scattered in very random schedule, poor ground conditions and finally lack of time and funding, Speer decided that an impressive new grandstand would be located on the eastern embankment of the lake, while the rest of the embankments would be upgraded with steps for the spectators. Regarding Hitler's taste and impression of the ancient architecture symbols mentioned above, Speer transformed the idea of classical design from Pergamon Altar deriving from the first half of the second century BC. The structure was huge as it was 360 metres long and 35 metres wide. Along the tribune a 50-metre - wide asphalt road was built for the vehicles and men to march right in front of the speaker's podium. The whole layout plan for the Rally Grounds including the Zeppelin Feld became world famous for gold medal it was granted in 1937 during the International Exhibition in Paris [2, 3].

As we know today, post-antiwar attitude of the European society (especially in Germany) enabled almost unrestricted development of the modernistic architecture which lasted till the 1980s. However the lack of human face - that modern architecture eventually showed - led to the postmodern movement, which nowadays takes different aspects. Some of them are curious and unacceptable, some generate reluctance and repulsion as well as emotions of admiration, excitement or respect, just like the ones that Nazi architecture generated. This is why today it seems reasonable to find out if the manipulations in architecture to induce such emotions

are universal in order to point them out as a warning of how dangerous they could be...

Survey material and methodology

Survey material

First of all, the author intended to separate ideology from the architectural instruments used to obtain specific political benefits. German totalitarian architecture was supposed to achieve such benefits thanks to some perceptual codes designedly hidden in it. People remembering period of totalitarian indoctrination (whether Nazi or Communist origin) probably would respond involving their ideological associations from the past. Due to that for the most objective results of the survey a group of young men was selected to assure their impartiality. The author chose only architects as he wanted them to point out some compositional instruments that generate the emotions they felt during the survey. The author presumed that nobody except an architect could do that properly. Eventually, the research was carried out with polling methods among the respondent group of young architects aged 20–30 years presumably without awareness of any relationship between classical architecture and Nazism.

Methodology

The survey described in the following article is a part of vast research on emotional influence of totalitarian architecture from the 1930s and 1940s. In the objective research a method of *diagnostic poll (sounding)* was applied. According to B. Dunaj, the term: *diagnostic poll (sounding)* means: ...research of public opinion, based on collecting responses to the same questions asked a group of people [4]. According to T. Pilch: *method of diagnostic poll (sounding) is means of gathering the knowledge about structural and functional attributes as well as about society phenomena dynamics, opinions and notions of chosen collectivities (...) basing on especially selected group to represent general population* [5]. For the needs of the presented research, a *survey* has been used. According to W. Zaczynski it is a method of: *acquiring of independent data by questioning chosen people with use of printed question list, called questionnaire* [6]. W. Okoń defines the term of *survey* as: *mass phenomena study basing on especially prepared questionnaire* [7].

The formula of the survey is open, as it comprises so called *open* and *half-open* questions in order not to suggest any ideological notion known from the past. Of course it has been much more difficult to qualify such kind of survey results, as the answers were extremely different depending on very subjective awareness, sensitivity and experience of each respondent. But it was necessary to conduct an open survey on the actual preliminary research phase in order to select most often

appearing associations and emotions arising from the shown architecture. In view of the above, it is a *quality* method. The ultimate phase of the pooling would be survey comprising *closed questions*, which would allow the use of quantity methods, so the whole survey could be classified as *panel process*. As mentioned, the survey was conducted on the respondent group of young architects aged 20–30 years, therefore the method used could be classified as *quasi-representative*. The process was carried out in groups of 8–10 people directly in the presence of the pollster, so it is a *point-black, auditorium* method. From the transparency point of view it is classified as *anonymous*, as respondents were questioned without giving their names (they set out only general data like age, profession, gender, nationality and so on). Regarding to expanded scope of questions the method is classified as *omnibus* type, as respondents had to point out imaginable function, period of erection, architectural style as well as associations & emotions these objects generated. The survey results were finally summarized and collated in tables listing the percentage of obtained results, so the last stage is classified as *quantity* method. Ultimately, used methods are classified as: *open, quality* and *quantity, quasi-representative, point-black* and *auditorium, omnibus* and the whole research is classified as *panel process*.

The course of the survey

The survey was conducted in December 2015, the respondents were divided into groups of 8–10 people and they did not have the possibility of communicating between each other. The polling population consisted of 35 young Polish architects between 20 and 30 years old. During the survey a series of pictures of Zeppelin Field Tribune in Nuremberg was shown approximately for 3 minutes (Fig. 1, 2). Each respondent had to answer a few questions about object's features like: the author, architectural style, period of erection, function as well as his emotions and associations they felt (pointing out the compositional instruments that created them). The questions about the objects' features were set out to check up if the respondents had been ideologically influenced. Most of the respondents could point out neither the exact author nor a single association with the Nazi regime what showed the assumption to choose young respondents generation for the survey was correct. We must be aware that audio and light visual effects were also applied during the mass gatherings involving Nazi architecture. In order to create congenial conditions, the music of M.J. Burkard *Director's Cut* album DCD042, *Epic Themes 2* was performed [8].

Structure of the questionnaire

The questionnaire form is shown in the Fig. 3.



Fig. 1. Zeppelin Field Tribune – Nuremberg (designed by Albert Speer: 1935-1937); Stage façade [13].



Fig. 2. Zeppelinfeld Tribune – Nurnberg (designed by Albert Speer: 1934-1936); Rear façade [14].

ANKIETA OTWARTA: BADANIE EMOCJI PERCEPCJI OBIEKTÓW ARCHITEKTONICZNYCH			
DATA BADANIA:			
DANE SEGMENTU ANKIETOWANEGO:			
Grupa wiekowa (wiek) ankietywanego:			
Osobisty profil psychologiczny wg ankietywanego: (introwertyk, ekstrawertyk, racjonalista, romantyk, marzyciel, formalista, pedant, szczęśliwiec , uogólniacz , kreatywny, odwrócony, aktywny, bierny, inny (dopisać))			
Narodowość ankietywanego:			
Płeć ankietywanego:			
Grupa zawodowa ankietywanego:			
Wykształcenie ankietywanego:			
Zainteresowania prywatne (hobby) ankietywanego:			
Preferowany przez ankietywanego styl architektoniczny/kierunek w sztuce wizualnej:			
Hierarchia ważności w architekturze wg ankietywanego: A. Funkcja, B. Forma, C. Konstrukcja, D. Ekonomia			
No	Przypuszczalna: 01 nazwa/funkcja obiektu 02 styl 03 architekt 04 okres/data wybudowania	Skojarzenia ankietywanego przy percepcji obiektu ze wskazaniem elementów budynku i jego kompozycji wywołujących takie skojarzenia. Ocena w skali 1-10.	Opis emocji ankietywanego przy percepcji obiektu ze wskazaniem elementów budynku i jego kompozycji wywołujących takie skojarzenia. Ocena w skali 1-10.
			Ocena ankietywanego w „ <i>likertach</i> ” w skali 1-10
			„+” „-”

Fig. 3. The questionnaire form.

Results of the research

All the respondents' answers from the first unit concerning their knowledge of the observed architecture have been classified in the diagrams shown in the Fig. 4, 5. In the same manner, the respondents' answers from

the second unit concerning their associations of observed architecture have been classified in the diagrams shown on Fig. 6, 7. Finally the respondents' answers from the third unit set out to establish emotions of observed objects have been classified in the diagram shown in the Fig. 8, 9.

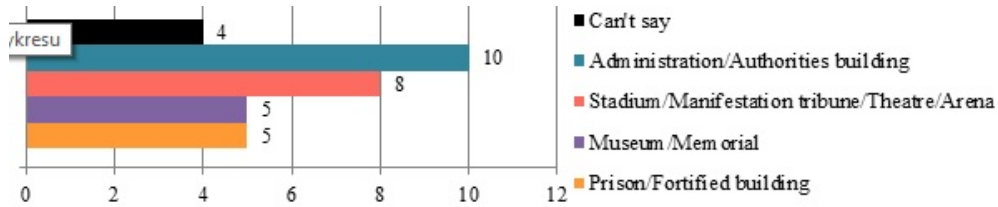


Fig. 4. Imagined function code.

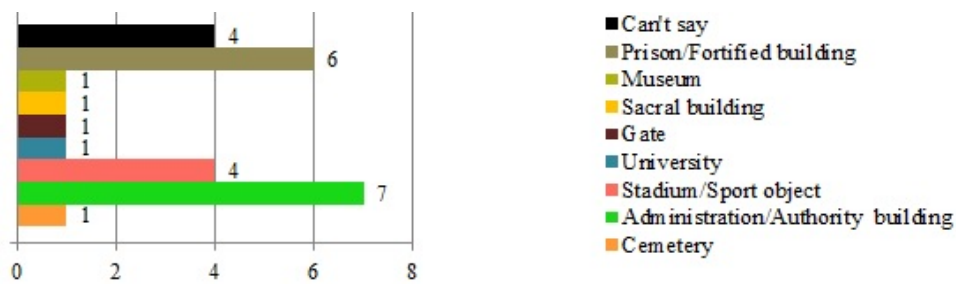


Fig. 5. Imagined function code.

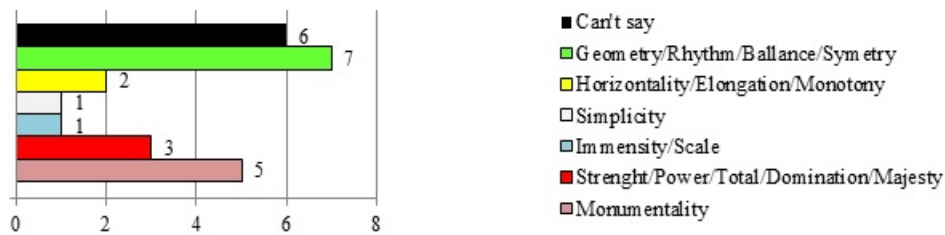


Fig. 6. Associational features.

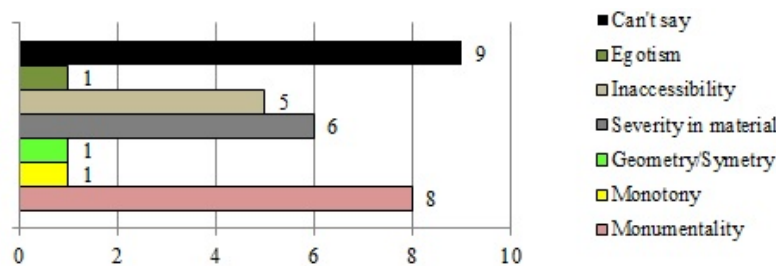


Fig. 7. Associational features.

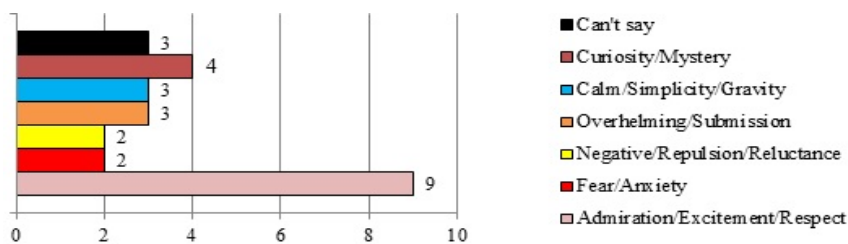


Fig. 8. Emotional features.

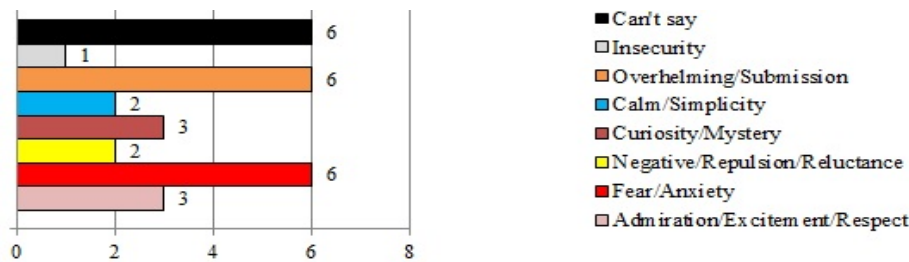


Fig. 9. Emotional features.

Discussion on the results of the research

The final results on the associational and emotional survey have been shown accordingly in the tables 1 and 2. The penultimate columns of the tables contain arithmetically summarized respondents' assessments. The last columns of the tables show percentage of each type of assessment in relation to the whole amount of the ratings including those *can't say*. Please note that respondents' associations as well as emotions have been grouped decreasingly in order to point up the top highly scored ratings. These would be the subject of particular attention when to discuss the results of the survey as well as in further research on the stage of *closed polling*.

Research on functional code

First of all, the results of control questions from the first unit should be commented in order to verify the possibility of ideological influence of the Nazi architecture. The diagrams presented in the Fig. 4, 5 show that generally the function code of the object hasn't been identified. Such answers as most highly rated *Administration/Authority building* are quite far away from the actual function. It must be highlighted that some strange answers like: *Prison/Fortified building, University, Museum* as well as *Sacral building* or *Cemetery* also occurred. Few respondents pointed out that the object shown on the photos was *Stadium/Sport object* but without additional data. So, we might conclude that this object is not perceived by the respondents as a Nazi one.

Research on associational features

Final results of the associational features research are shown in the Table 1. Comparatively, the biggest percentage of answers *can't say* that reached 26.78% should be pointed up. The next ones were *Massiveness/Monumentality* that reached 23.20% and these were accompanied by *Power/Strength/Domination/Majesty* rated 5.36%. Such features acted to overwhelm and dominate spectators in order to - as Hitler declared - cit.: *...make an impression on people, especially on the smaller dignitaries* [9]. Associations like: *Geometry/Order/Harmony/Balance/Alignment/*

Symmetry/Rhythm reached 19.09%. It is not a surprise, that geometry in all of its aspects like harmony, symmetry, rhythm, order is mostly associated with Nazi architecture and German architecture in general. It should be realized, that Germans as a nation are known for their rationalism and clarity. Hitler often remarked cit.: *To be German means to be clear* [10]. The best way to express clarity is geometry as it's understandable without additional explanations. The Hitler's architecture had to be understandable for the masses, it was pointed. Another association of this architecture serves for the same meaning: *Simplicity/Solidity*, although it was rated only 1.79%. Such a low rating might be explained by the similar values between geometry and simplicity and respondents probably mentioned geometry more often. Also *Severity in form and material* has been rated comparatively high - 10.71%. In fact, the severity is one of the most important features of the Nazi architecture. Hitler demanded from the - so called - *Fuhrerbauten* to be clear, solid, ever-lasting for next generations as well as resembling the greatness of the ancient empires. To be possibly compatible with the rough and tough political style of Nazis, Albert Speer compiled an architectural solution that was a sort of abstract or modernized neo-classicism and managed to seem heroic, solid and durable at the same time. To articulate it Speer frequently used travertine stone laid on cubic mass of the edifices as well as put emphasis on right angles, great flat surfaces on the facades and solid angular decoration. In this way his buildings were an implementation of simplified neo-classical standards and some modern abstract formalism derived from the 1920s. Such hybrid certainly generates a feeling of severity, which was observed by respondents during the research. The fourth position in percentage was taken by the associations about *Inaccessibility/Closure* which were rated 8.93%. This result proves once again that the respondents didn't imagine the proper function of the object. The grandstand stage was opened towards the spectators' field, although this feature was rated only for Fig. 2 in which an association of closure and inaccessibility might be reasonable. The point is the respondents didn't link both Fig. 1, 2 as the same object. *Horizontality/Elongation/Monotony* rated 5.36% are the composition elements that occur in Nazi architecture to symbolize durability, extension and omnipresence of the authority.

Table 1. Results on the associational features research [%].

Associational features for object: Zeppelin Field Tribune in Nuremberg 1934-1936	Fig. No.		Results	
	4	5	pts	%
Can't say	6	9	15	26.78
Massiveness/Monumentality	5	8	13	23.20
Geometry/Order/Harmony/Balance/Alignment/Symmetry/Rhythm	7	1	8	14.29
Severity in form & material	-	6	6	10.71
Inaccessibility/Closure	-	5	5	8.93
Power/Strength/Domination/Majesty	3	-	3	5.36
Horizontality/Elongation/Monotony	2	1	3	5.36
Simplicity/Solidity	1	-	1	1.79
Egotism	-	1	1	1.79
Immensity/Scale/Space	1	-	1	1.79

Research on emotional features

Final results of the emotional features research are shown in Table 2.

Like at associational survey, the highest percentage of answers *can't say* should be pointed up – it reached 19.57%. Second by rating were emotions: *Overwhelming/Submission* with 19.57% ratings. Altogether with the occurrence of emotions: *Fear/Anxiety/Domination/Helplessness/Escape* rated 17.39% as well as of *Negative/Repulsion/Reluctance* rated 4.35% it proves that Speer's architecture was set out to dominate the

crowds and the whole German society. However, those who stayed against the regime should feel fear and anxiety about the omnipresent Nazi Party. Emotions: *Calm/Simplicity/Gravity* with ratings of 10.89% show that the regime under solemnity and dignified calm is able to assure care and protection to everybody in all domains of social life. The group of emotions: *Admiration/Excitement/Respect* rated 6.52% is adequate for the function that the grandstand played. Other emotions: *Neutrality, Insecurity/Danger* should be examined more precisely on the stage of *closed polling*, to point out their real significance.

Table 2. Results on the emotional features research [%].

Emotional features for object: Zeppelin Field Tribune in Nuremberg 1934-1936	Fig. No.		Results	
	4	5	pts	%
Can't say	3	6	9	19.57
Overwhelming/Submission	3	6	9	19.57
Fear/Anxiety/Domination/Helplessness/Escape	2	6	8	17.39
Curiosity/Mystery	4	3	7	15.22
Calm/Simplicity/Gravity	3	2	5	10.89
Admiration/Excitement/Respect	-	3	3	6.52
Negative/Repulsion/Reluctance	2	-	2	4.35
Neutrality	-	2	2	4.35
Insecurity/Danger	-	1	1	2.17

Conclusions

As Hitler said once: *My actions are always based on a political way of thinking* [11, 12] the survey proves that architecture of objects erected in Rally Grounds in Nuremberg - especially designed by Albert Speer Zeppelin Field Tribune - is full of manipulations strictly bound with political targets of the regime and its awesome ideology. It shows how architecture might be a strong political weapon which becomes most dangerous in hands of nationalistic dictators. It is a great warning for any architect. He should take into consideration first, to whom he gives his best knowledge and professionalism.

As for the highest percentage of answers *can't say*, in both units concerning associational & emotional features, it should be pointed out, that contemporary architecture in Poland has entered the phase of emotional crisis for some time. Such fact might mean that Polish architects of young generation do have huge problems about articulation of their emotions.

Possibly, the main cause of such a factor is uncritical overflow of worthless architecture, intensively created by present profit - greedy investors and developers, as well as domination of only economic and technocratic kind of thinking in today's architectural design in Poland. This means it is really necessary to stop the invasion of urban and architectural trend, which says exactly *nothing*. If such a trend is continued, it is highly

likely that our environment would become an emotional desert in the nearest future and the only architecture examples to create any emotions would be those from the past, including Nazi remains. In this specific way, Hitler's idea of glory by means of the architectural remains of his regime would become fulfilled. Hitler was probably one of the most brutal dictators and mass knackers in the European history, but much historical evidencen proves that his particular attention to the

architecture generated objects, that couldn't be passed by without any reflection, just opposite to the attitude of the majority of present investors. The last ones are accompanied by the mass of impassive development urban plans according to the whole preposterous planning system in our country. Are we still going to be dumb witnesses of presumably biggest crime on our intellectual environment?

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